



Mike McGinn, Mayor
City of Seattle

July 5, 2011

Commission for People with disAbilities
c/o Felicia Yearwood
810 3rd. Ave. #750
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Ms. Sekins and Ms. Gramer,

Thank you for your letter outlining your concerns about the city's proposals for disabled parking permits. This is an issue that concerns me as well and you're right that steps need to be taken to improve the system.

My first priority for solving some of the underlying issues around disabled parking placard use is to work on changes at the state level. There are several potential changes that we will be developing strategy around that could have a positive impact on what happens on the ground in Seattle.

- Moving towards a progressive fine structure. Currently, unauthorized use of a placard or permit has a flat monetary penalty of \$250. A progressive fine structure of \$250 for the first violation, \$500 for the second, and \$1,000 for the third and subsequent violation would have more teeth.
- The amount of fines eligible for suspension by the courts could be limited to ensure higher fines for repeat offenders are not suspended.
- The renewal process could be shortened. Currently, permanent parking placards are valid for at least five years. The renewal period could be shortened to two or three years to limit the opportunities for abuse.
- The timeframe for a temporary placard could be reinforced as a 6-month maximum with a specification by the physician for actual number of months needed, rather than what is more of a default six months.
- Physician requirements for could be reinforced to ensure greater accountability.

My staff looks forward to working with the Commission as we develop these strategies and I'll count on your support to get changes made at the state legislature.

We will also focus on additional data collection on abuse and enforcement as we continue to study this issue.

I understand that the Commission opposes the previously proposed four-hour parking pilot because of concerns about the impact to legal permit holders for whom a car is the only option to move freely about the city. As we contemplated whether or not to go forward with a pilot, I directed the Seattle Department of Transportation to look for ways to mitigate impacts on the

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most vulnerable users who depend on all-day parking to access their workplaces or appointments. In the future, if and when state-level changes are made and we see the need for bringing back the potential for this pilot, we will ensure that we continue to work with you to identify ways to mitigate the impact on people with disabilities. Please feel free to talk directly with SDOT Transportation Planner Allison Schwartz about this or anything else related to disabled parking permits at (206) 386-4654 or at allison.schwartz@seattle.gov.

We need to create a transportation system in our city that works for all users. With your help, we can reform this system to support the needs of people with disabilities while also preventing permit abuse and opening more parking spaces for all drivers. SDOT and SPD staff will continue to work with the Commission on state-level changes and opportunities for improving public education and awareness.

Thank you again for writing and your continued involvement to improve Seattle. Please continue to be in touch on this and any other issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael McGinn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mike McGinn
Mayor of Seattle

MM/rcd